4: Leeds E-5 (1958) 1960 SS19 Yaruro SS19

their attention. The shaman's position as link is emphasized by the fact that his wife invariably sits next to him during the *tonghés* to minister to him and to supply him cigarettes and drink. Thus, the socio-economic link of the household is also the unique link between the sexes in ceremonial life.

The various forms of socio-economic and ceremonial division of the sexes is even more remarkably underscored by the existence of female shamanism. As one might expect, shamanesses behave differently from shamans. Shamanesses sing only in the day-time. They, like Ku'maⁿ, sing from hammocks whereas men sing sitting on the ground or dancing. Furthermore, messages trasmitted to them from Ku'maⁿ are sent only to them, though the men hear and understand them. The men listen to these messages with care and respect and with the air that there are things to be learned from them which they would otherwise not hear. The shamanesses cannot receive male gods or their messages. Female shamanism seems to be an affirmation of the kin-bonds of the matri-centered local group as well as a means of asserting the values and rights pertaining to the women's world. The women's experience ideologically, as well as socially and biologically, is recognized as being systematically distinct from men's experience in life.

Behavior in the *tonghés* is very relaxed. Villagers laugh, joke, sleep, play, get up, walk about. Sometimes persons may even fail to attend if they have chosen to go to work the next day. The only thing explicitly forbidden, because Ku'maⁿ would consider it most indelicate, is sexual intercourse. Otherwise, the lack of formalism and freedom of individual behavior so often noted before is again found here.

The importance of the *tonghés* as the foremost way of reinforcing social relations and communal values as well as for curing is seen in several ways. First, when there has been no *tonghé* for several days, one begins to feel and hear a bruiting for *another* tonghé. It is felt that much time has elapsed since the last *tonghé*. Someone asks what's wrong that we haven't had a *tonghé* in so long. Another says we need a *tonghé*. Rumors of *tonghé* begin to be heard. By the fifth or sixth day another *tonghé* is held and community bonds are again reasserted. Again, the sexual division of labor and social life observed in the other- and hither-worlds is systematically carried through into religious observances. We have mentioned the seating of men separate from women and the separate greetings given to the gods. This theme is carried still further in the exclusive women's shamanism and the equally exclusive capacity of men to do curing, either as shamans or as purely private individuals.

The *tonghé* illuminates much about Yaruro ideology. First, shamans both male and female are not considered authorities possessed of special gifts and prerogatives who interpret lore for the entire community. Rather they are considered merely the comunity religious spokesmen for the public expression of community values and for curing, who, by their own choice, enjoy and are willing to undertake the long, arduous work of training and practice. They reaffirm community bonds by repenting in endless verses the precepts and knowledge contained in the Yaruro ideology. All knowledge and all experience is, at least potentially, open to all members of the community and even the private or personal experience of each is made known to all. Any member of